

CHARLES COUNTY GOVERNMENT

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

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TO: Planning Commission Members

FROM: Amy Blessinger, Planner III
Department of Planning and Growth Management



SUBJECT: Hughesville Village Zoning Text Amendment #17-145 and Zoning Map Amendment #17-55:
Public Hearing

DATE: March 22, 2017

Background: Charles County is working to develop new zoning for the Village of Hughesville. Staff and the project consultant provided a briefing on the project at your February 27 meeting. As discussed at this meeting, the purpose of the zoning is to promote a traditional, walkable pattern of development in the village, as envisioned by the Hughesville Village Revitalization Plan. The new zoning will promote the transformation of Old Leonardtown Road into a pedestrian-friendly "Main Street"; help promote redevelopment of existing properties; allow for supporting residential uses; and promote employment for the village and surrounding area by maintaining existing industrial land for this purpose. The Revitalization Plan recommends new zoning, as the current Village zoning presents hindrances to the vision of the Plan for this walkable village.

The county has been working with a consulting team and members of the public to prepare the draft zoning. As part of the process, two public meetings were held on July 14, 2015 and October 13, 2015 to obtain input on proposed zoning concepts. Draft zoning text and zoning map were then prepared for a proposed Hughesville Village Zoning District consisting of four Sub-Zones: Core, Gateway, Residential, and Employment. The draft zoning was reviewed by county staff, and subsequent revisions completed by the consultant, during 2016. A mailing was sent to the property owners in the village requesting their input on the draft zoning in December 2016; the general public was also notified of the opportunity to provide input. Several comments from members of the public were received and have been considered by staff and the consultant. Staff has now finalized the draft zoning text and map amendments for the legislative adoption process.

Discussion: The purpose of the meeting this evening is to hold a public hearing on the proposed zoning and map amendments. Attached for your review are the following documents:

- **Document A: Hughesville Village Zoning Text Amendment #17-145.** This consists of proposed zoning text containing standards to implement the traditional village character and development pattern as outlined above.
- **Document B: Hughesville Village Zoning Map Amendment #17-55.** This consists of proposed changes to re-map parcels in the Village to Hughesville Village Core (HVC), Hughesville Village Gateway (HVG), Hughesville Village Residential (HVR), and Hughesville Village Employment (HVE).
- **Document C: Charles County Architectural and Site Design Guidelines and Standards - Minor Revisions.** The intent of these minor revisions is to add the Hughesville Village Sub-Zones to the

list of zones to which the county's architectural and site design standards apply. The recommended revisions also include other consistency updates.

- **Document D: Historic Preservation in Hughesville Village – draft text for a brochure.** While the proposed zoning is intended to encourage redevelopment, the county also desires to encourage preservation of Hughesville Village's numerous historic properties. The brochure is a supporting document to the zoning package which outlines the provisions in the proposed zoning that provide an incentive for property owners to preserve their historic structures. The brochure also contains a comprehensive listing of federal, state and county programs and funding sources that can be used to assist property owners in preserving historic structures.

Also attached is a Frequently Asked Questions document, which was developed to provide guidance to property owners and the general public on the new zoning.

The proposed Amendments and supporting documents are posted to BoardDocs at <http://www.boarddocs.com/md/chrlsco/Board.nsf/Public>. More information on the project can also be found on the County website at <http://www.charlescountymd.gov/pgm/planning/hughesville-village-revitalization-plan-and-implementation>.

Recommendation: Staff recommends the Planning Commission review the attached Zoning Text Amendment #17-145, Zoning Map Amendment #17-55, Architectural and Site Design Standards revisions, and historic preservation brochure text; consider the public comments and hold the record open for a period of 30 days before making a final recommendation to the County Commissioners on the proposed legislation and supporting documents.

Cc: Steven Ball, *AICP, LEED AP, Planning Director*
Cathy Thompson, *Community Planning Program Manager*
Kirby Blass, *Planner III*

Hughesville Village Rezoning

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- The Hughesville Village Revitalization Plan, adopted by the County Commissioners in 2007, recommends new zoning for the Village of Hughesville. The purpose of the new zoning is to promote a walkable village by encouraging village scale design, with pedestrian-friendly storefront design and amenities; providing sidewalks; requiring ample landscaping along the frontage of properties; and generally ensuring that the scale of development is compatible with the existing development in the village. The new zoning is intended to encourage new development while at the same time, preserve the existing village scale and character. The proposed new zoning consists of four Sub-Zones:
 - Hughesville Village Core (HVC) – This is to be a mixed commercial and residential area mostly along portions of Old Leonardtown Road and MD Route 231. The intent is for this area to be lined with retail stores, services and restaurants and other small scale retail and commercial. Buildings are to be placed close to the road to encourage people to walk from store to store. This zone allows a mix of commercial and residential uses appropriate for a rural village setting.
 - Hughesville Village Gateway (HVG) – This mixed-use zone is being applied to areas at and near the entrances to the Village, to ensure that development provides an attractive sense of entry into the Village. This zone allows for larger uses that can be set further back from the road, with an emphasis on good design and landscaping along property frontages.
 - Hughesville Village Residential (HVR) – This zone allows for primarily single family homes in residential neighborhoods with convenient pedestrian and vehicular connections and open spaces. The zone generally encompasses the established residential neighborhoods in the village along with other areas currently zoned as Residential Village (RV).
 - Hughesville Village Employment (HVE) – This zone maintains existing industrial land to allow for light industrial, utility, and other employment uses. It mainly encompasses the current SMECO and Hughesville Industrial Park properties.
- What is the current zoning of my property?

The current zoning can be found on the official County zoning maps on the County website at <https://www.charlescountymd.gov/pgm/planning/zoning-maps>. You can also go to the PGM Interactive Map on the county website and look up your current zoning by inputting your address. The Interactive Map can be viewed at this link <http://charlesco.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5dd6877acda14c15985e76d389dc a7ed>.
- How is this different from my current zoning?

The current zones in the village are Village Commercial (CV), Village Residential (RV), and Light Industrial (IG). The new zones differ somewhat from the current zones in terms of the following:

 - 1) Permitted Uses: The new Hughesville Village zones allow a different mix of permitted uses. Permitted uses were included based on their appropriateness for a village setting.
 - 2) Design Standards: The new Hughesville Village zones have more detailed design standards, in terms of setbacks, architecture, landscaping, streetscape, and other design oriented requirements. The intent is to promote an attractive, walkable, small-scale rural village atmosphere.

3) Development Densities: The residential density in the Residential Sub-Zone will remain the same as in the current RV Zone – a maximum of 1.8 homes per acre for properties on well and septic, and a maximum of 3 homes per acre on properties with central water and sewer. In the Core and Gateway Sub-Zones, a maximum of 5 homes per acre would be allowed in a residential subdivision, and up to 8 homes per acre would be allowed in a residential mixed use building (this is for apartments on upper floors above a first floor commercial use). It should be noted that single-family detached houses, accessory apartments and apartments above stores (in the Core and Gateway Sub-Zones only) would be allowed under the new Village zoning, while townhouses and stand-alone apartment buildings would not be allowed.

- **How were the boundaries determined for the new zoning?**

The boundaries of the new zoning are the existing Village boundaries, which corresponds to the Hughesville Village Priority Funding Area (PFA). A PFA is a locally designated area where economic development and revitalization are encouraged; these areas are eligible for State grants and other State funding and assistance. The intent of the new zoning is to not expand the village outside of its current boundaries.

- **Is the new zoning official yet?**

The new zoning has not been adopted yet and is still in draft form. At this time, the county is inviting the public to make comment and provide input on a more informal basis. Public input from this effort will be evaluated for possible revisions to the zoning text and map. The revised zoning text and maps will then be presented at public hearings before the County Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners. The public will have the opportunity to provide comment at these future hearings as well. After the public hearings, the County Commissioners will vote on whether to adopt the new zoning into County law.

- **How does this new zoning affect my property?**

Existing developed properties can generally continue to operate as they have been under the current zoning. If you desire to redevelop your property, you will need to comply with the new zoning. If you desire to expand an existing use, your level of compliance with the new zoning will depend on the extent of the expansion. The new zoning contains a chart, Thresholds and Applicability of Standards, which will serve as a guide for those wishing to develop or expand.

- **What if my property contains a use that will no longer be permitted under the new zoning?**

Existing developed properties with such uses will generally be able to remain in place and continue to operate as they had under the current zoning. They may also be allowed some limited expansion. If you would like change to a different use for your property that is also not permitted by the new zoning, you would not be able to do so under the new zoning. As stated above, the permitted uses in the new zoning were included based on their appropriateness for a village setting.

- **I own a single family home that will be in the new Core or Gateway sub-zones, which allow commercial development. How will this affect my property?**

As stated above, the Village Core and Gateway Sub-Zones are intended for a mix of residential and commercial uses. While single family homes will continue to be permitted uses in these Sub-Zones, any new development in these zones that fronts on Old Leonardtown Road and MD Route 231 will be required to be non-residential use or mixed use buildings. However, existing single family detached

homes in these areas may remain in place and also may be expanded without having to comply with the maximum front setback requirements.

- **My house or building is historic. How will they be affected by the new zoning?**

The new zoning encourages the preservation of buildings that possess historic character and interest in Hughesville Village. It also encourages the re-use of these historic properties if an owner so desires. For example, in the Residential Sub-Zone, bed and breakfast Inns and museums or art centers would only be allowed within historic structures to provide options for re-use of historic homes. Furthermore, the new zoning requires new development to respect the scale of adjacent older buildings. The county is currently preparing a brochure for historic property owners in the village, which will provide more detail on how the new zoning will promote the preservation of historic buildings. This brochure will be made available to anyone who requests it. For more information on historic buildings in Hughesville Village, contact Cathy Thompson, Program Manager, at (301) 396-5815 or at ThompsCa@CharlesCountyMD.gov.

- **Will this new zoning open up new areas for development in Hughesville?**

The new zoning is within the existing Village boundaries and will not expand new areas for development in the surrounding area. The current Village zoning already allows commercial and residential development at the present time. The intent of the new zoning is more to change the form, pattern and character of development, to allow for a more walkable village. The land outside of the Village boundaries is mostly zoned Agricultural Conservation (AC), which allows development at 1 house per 3 acres. The AC zoning outside the village boundaries will generally not change as a result of the Hughesville Village rezoning process.

For more information, contact Amy Blessinger, Planner III, at (301) 645-0650 or by email at BlessingA@CharlesCountyMD.gov

